

STARS

Florida Historical Quarterly

Volume 31
Number 4 *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol 31,
Issue 4

Article 9

1952

Book Review: Space and Time Perspective in Northern St. Johns Archeology, Florida

Charles H. Fairbanks



Part of the [American Studies Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq>

University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Florida Historical Quarterly by an authorized editor of STARS. For more information, please contact STARS@ucf.edu.

Recommended Citation

Fairbanks, Charles H. (1952) "Book Review: Space and Time Perspective in Northern St. Johns Archeology, Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 31 : No. 4 , Article 9.

Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol31/iss4/9>

BOOK REVIEWS

Goggin, John M.: *Space and Time Perspective in Northern St. Johns Archeology, Florida* Yale University Publications in Anthropology, No. 47, Yale University Press, New Haven. 1952. (147 pp., 12 plates, 8 text figures, one map, \$2.00)

This summary completes what may be called a preliminary organization of archeological materials from virtually all of the State of Florida. Workers in adjacent areas can only look with envy and chagrin, at the very large amount of published material available recently on Florida archeology. Willey's *Archeology of the Florida Gulf Coast* together with the various monographs by Goggin, Rouse, and Ferguson now give very usable summaries of most of Florida, indicating the present state of knowledge and the chief problems and gaps still to be filled. The present work represents a synthesis of previously published material, as well as an examination of Florida specimens in museums.

The study opens with a concise description of the area to be discussed - that area from the coast to approximately the Alachua-Putnam County line and from Allenhurst and the Lake Harney outlet north to include parts of the Okefinokee Swamp. This total area is further subdivided into four subdivisions: I) from St. Augustine and Palatka north, where the river is wide and coastal lagoons are absent; II) the St. Johns from Lake Harney to just north of Palatka; III) the coast from St. Augustine to Allenhurst, with coastal lagoons; and IV) the "scrub" area around the Oklawaha River drainage. The natural landscape is described as it exists at present and the recent ecological changes are pointed out. There is a brief discussion of the early visits of Europeans to Florida. This is orientated toward the archeological pictures of Indians, forts, and missions. A table summarizing the data on missions in existence from 1597 to 1697 is included. The tribes occupying this section are briefly sketched and the references seem to include all pertinent works.

Under "Archeological Research" is a valuable summary of explorations and notices from Spanish times on. A temporal chart of the cultural sequence shows the cultural periods in graphic form.

These periods are: the Mt. Taylor, Orange, St. Johns, St. Augustine, and Seminole. Indications point to a date of about 1850 B.C. for the Orange Period. The St. Johns Period ends soon after the arrival of the French and Spanish in 1565. The St. Augustine and Seminole Periods are within the span of written records. Each period is briefly characterized by its typical artifacts, type of site, burials, etc. The sites showing remains of each period are listed.

The Mt. Taylor Period is characterized by the lack of pottery and is the oldest at present known in Florida. It is followed by the Orange Period in which pottery tempered with fibers first appears. The St. Johns Period is the longest and most characteristic of the region. It is in consequence subdivided into a total of six sections under two main divisions, St. Johns I and St. Johns II. The presence of an unclassified complex with bannerstones in this period is noted. St. Johns II is distinguished mainly by the introduction of pottery with a check stamped surface, extends to about 1650 and contains several types of Spanish pottery. The St. Augustine Period follows and is the remains of those forts, settlements, and missions where Spaniard and Indian lived in varying degrees of harmony and cooperation from 1650 until about 1730. This is the period about which possibly the most has been learned in recent years. Almost nothing, archeologically, is known about the Seminole Period, but, since the publication of this work, Dr. Goggin has located several Seminole sites and further information can be expected.

The next section deals with the aboriginal and historical "traditions" of the Northern St. Johns area. "The term tradition refers to a distinct cultural complex which may in the course of time pass through some changes but not enough to alter the

basic configuration." In other terms these traditions may be regarded as the various streams of culture present in prehistoric Florida. At the present time ten cultural traditions are recognized in Florida: Paleo-Indian, Archaic, St. Johns, Malabar, Gulf, Glades, Florida Mississippian, Alachua, Spanish-Indian, and Seminole. Of these the Paleo-Indian, Archaic, St. Johns, Spanish-Indian, and Seminole are represented in the Northern St. Johns. A chart shows the temporal and spacial position of the traditions in the ten archeological areas of Florida. Each of the six traditions present on the Northern St. Johns is discussed under the headings: Definition, Distribution, Environmental Relations, and History. Under Definition the author give the salient points of the tradition, weaving them into a summary of its probable origins and cultural relationships. These sections on the traditions are possibly the most important in the book as they give us a brief view of the Indian way of life in each case. The sections on environmental relations do much to tie the Indians to the land in a manner too often ignored in both archeology and history.

The author's Historical Reconstruction will appeal to the general reader, for it is a continuing stream of human events, and this is tied to the cultural relations outside the Florida area.

Appendix A lists 432 archeological sites and classifies them according to the periods represented. Each site is numbered and located on an accompanying map. Published references to materials and the location of materials in various museums are also given. As an index of work already done in Florida this section alone is of exceptional value. It forms a background for future work in the St. Johns area and will serve as a ready reference work in neighboring areas.

Appendix B discusses types of artifacts found in the area, treating of pottery at great length, but the non-ceramic artifacts are by no means neglected. The twelve plates give a brief, but adequate, representation of the types examined. Finally there

is a twelve page bibliography that includes all the archeological publications and much if not all of the pertinent historical references.

It is difficult to find any fault with this work. Dr. Goggin has presented a very adequate summary of what is now known about the Northern St. Johns region, an area rich in archeological sites and important in the early settlement of Florida. As the author points out it is a preliminary survey; other sites and other levels of known sites will surely be added to the list presented. In the chart of traditions on page 65 the temporal span of the Paleo-Indian and Archaic Traditions seems too short for the present data. The present indications are that the Paleo-Indian may well go back to some five to ten thousand years before the present era. The list of sites and references is substantially correct and is the best orientation in work already done in Florida.

It seems to be that the major contribution of the book, its summary of existing information, is almost overshadowed by the cumulative effect of the summary itself. Until now the prehistory and early Spanish-Indian history of Florida was scattered widely in a series of detailed reports on specific sites. These were often obscure and difficult to locate except in specialized libraries. Even where readily available they offered no over-all picture of the Indians who once inhabited the region. This monograph not only summarizes the discrete facts but organizes them into a coherent whole. It is a truism that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. In any science, facts themselves are sterile and often have little meaning in themselves. In this case the outline of Indian traditions and periods adds a new dimension to Florida history and pre-history. With this as a base both archeological research and historical work should find new directions and old problems stated with a new clarity.

In the sections on the historical St. Augustine Period and the

Spanish-Indian Tradition Goggin has contributed much to our understanding of this important period of Florida history. By locating documented sites, describing specific types of Spanish and Indian pottery, he has furthered greatly the understanding of the acculturation process that went on during the first years of Florida's European history.

In Florida, as in many other states, archeology has too long been concerned with detailed enumerations of the inventories of various sites. Local history in most areas has been dedicated to recovery and publication of detailed documents, and often it seems concerned mainly with local heroes or events. In neither archeology or local history is there much evidence of interest in the larger economic and technological aspects of man's past. The plea is usually that there are too many gaps in the evidence and that "it is not yet the time for a summary." The present work shows clearly that the time for comprehensive treatment is here. The discussion of the environmental relationships of each cultural unit is a prime example of the conclusions that can be drawn. In treating of the Spanish-Indian period he illustrates clearly the contributions of archeology to history and of history to archeology, derived from the direct historical approach. The inter-influence of Spanish and Indian pottery sheds new light on the conditions prevailing in the missions and forts of the period. This view is amply supported by the documents but had not come to my attention, at least, until this book appeared. Current work by Dr. Goggin and his associates in both the Spanish-Indian and Seminole sites of the St. Johns area should do much to give both history and archeology new cultural perspectives. "Space and Time Perspective in Northern St. Johns Archeology" will give needed information to both historian and archeologist and furnish many suggestions for rewarding future research.

CHARLES H. FAIRBANKS

Ocmulgee National Monument